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SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

STATE FOR EAP/MLS, DRL/ILCSR MARK MITTELHAUSER
DOL FOR ILAB RACHEL RIGBY

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [ELAB](#) [ECON](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [CB](#)
SUBJECT: CAMBODIA: POST COMMENTS ON DRAFT TVPRA REPORT

REF: A. STATE 1730
[1](#)B. BUENOS AIRES 0048
[1](#)C. ULAANBAATAR 0013
[1](#)D. PHNOM PENH 0036
[1](#)E. 08 PHNOM PENH 0530

SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED

[1](#)1. (SBU) Post appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Department of Labor's (DOL) draft list of goods produced by forced or child labor as outlined in ref A. Additions to the list for Cambodia are not recommended at this time. However, Post would like to request the removal of two potentially erroneous items from DOL's draft list.

[1](#)2. (SBU) Post has concerns that the inclusion of gems and coal as items produced by child labor is based on outdated or erroneous information. While post has reported on the instance of child labor in bricks, rubber, salt, and seafood, we are not aware of corroborated evidence of significant or widespread child labor in the production of gems or coal.

[1](#)3. (SBU) Post believes the incorporation of the two items may be based on a literal interpretation of the 2001 Cambodian Child Labor Survey (CCLS) which labeled the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO) group 711 as gems and 931 as coal. The survey reported a fairly high number of child workers in each area. However, ISCO group 711 also includes miners, shotfirers, stone cutters, and carvers while group 931 includes mining and construction laborers. Post believes the majority of child laborers in the CCLS from group 711 are actually working in stone cutting rather than gem mining, while those in group 931 are construction laborers rather than coal miners. While there are known coal deposits in northern Cambodia and some gems are found in the north-western areas, there is currently no large-scale extraction. If children are involved in these small informal industries, they would most likely be working side-by-side with their family members and attending school if income permits. Large-scale, formal mining operations are not an area of concern for child labor in Cambodia. The Cambodian Ministry of Labor's Child Labor Department, the ILO, UNICEF, and NGOs including World Vision, LICADHO, and Winrock all stated that there is a lack of evidence of child labor relating to coal and gems.

[1](#)4. (SBU) Post shares the concerns raised by other posts, particularly para 6 of ref B, which states the need to be fully prepared to explain the determinations to the host government, and requests that gems and coal be withdrawn from DOL's draft list at this time. Post would only be in a position to explain and justify the inclusion of items on the list if they have strong corroborating source information used by DOL to create the list. The Cambodian government is committed to reducing child labor, and we want to ensure they continue to focus their resources on the areas with

documented significant incidences of child labor, forced labor, or forced child labor in the production of goods.
RODLEY